

## **Appendix A**

### **In-Home and Relative Care**

In addition to licensed homes and centers, there are two other choices for child care:

- 1) In-home care in which a person other than a parent or relative provides in-home care within the child's home.
- 2) Relative care in which care is provided by a related person other than the parent, either in the child's or the relative's home.

Caregivers in these situations are not required to be licensed under state law. They are eligible for DSHS subsidy if otherwise qualified for one of the Department's childcare programs. Relative care is also referred to as "Kith and Kin" care and as unregulated care. DSHS calculated that 35 percent, or 18,700 subsidized children, were receiving in-home or relative care in 1998.<sup>1</sup>

There are many reasons why parents might choose relative care. Relative care provides convenience for parents who have variable and unpredictable work obligations. The cost of relative care is often much less than formal care and, if the DSHS subsidy is not available, relative care affords parents the opportunity to make arrangements involving barter of services to reduce cash costs. They may also prefer that their child(ren) be cared for in their own home, in a familiar setting or by a familiar person.

If a parent eligible for DSHS subsidy chooses in-home or relative care, the parent gives the provider's name and address to DSHS. DSHS forwards the information to the Washington State Patrol for the required background investigation. In addition, the parent must assure the Department that the chosen caregiver is over eighteen and physically, mentally and emotionally able to give appropriate care to the child(ren) without using corporal punishment or psychological abuse. The parent must also assure the Department that the child(ren) are current on immunizations, that the home where care is to be provided is safe and the provider is informed about basic health practices.

Unlicensed caregivers may currently be paid \$2.06 per hour for the child requiring the greatest amount of care and either \$1.03 for each additional child or the provider's usual rate, which ever is less. The "Special Needs" additional payment standard for a child receiving in-home, relative care is \$0.62 per hour or the providers documented additional cost, whichever is greater. These rates do not vary by region within the state.

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<sup>1</sup> Licensed Child Care in Washington State: 1998, Marna Geyer Miller, Ph.D. and Laura Schrager, M.A.